

Frequently Asked Questions

Plaza Garage Enhancement Project

Updated 11/3/2016

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OVERVIEW

What's happening?

On Oct. 3, 2016, evening work began to improve parking in the Plaza Garage on the east Capitol Campus.

The work will take place between 8 p.m. and 4:30 a.m. on weekdays and 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on weekends from Oct. 3 to Dec. 30.

Why is this happening?

The Legislature has directed the Department of Enterprise Services to carry out a plan based on recommendations from a 2014 study [to improve parking on the Capitol Campus](#). As the number of employees visiting and working on the campus continues to grow, the demand for parking increases. The upgrades are designed to ease congestion and reduce travel time spent looking for employee parking.

The work will:

- Increase parking spots by more than 100 by reducing the size of some stalls and decreasing the amount of reserved parking
- Install signs to help drivers and pedestrians navigate the garage
- Remove and replace existing signage
- Repaint pedestrian walkways
- Add employee visitor parking to the 'A' level of the Garage near the Maple Park entrance

The contractor began work on the 'F' level of the Plaza Garage and is working up to the 'A' level between Oct. 3 and the end of December. Signs will direct parkers away from areas where evening work will take place.

This is a change.

The reduction in size of 70 percent of parking stalls is a change and will require an adjustment period. Drivers are urged to use extra caution and consideration when driving and parking in the Plaza Garage. Be aware of the cars parked next to you when entering and exiting your vehicles to avoid dings and scratches. DES parking and facilities staff want to help make this a smooth transition and will address questions and concerns in this FAQ as we receive them, or you can contact asset manager [Darlena Heglund](#) or the [Parking Office](#) directly.

VEHICLE ACCIDENTS, DAMAGE AND SAFETY

What should I do if my car is vandalized or hit in the garage?

Should anything happen to your vehicle, contact your insurance provider. If you are involved in an accident and it's not an emergency, report it to the Washington State Patrol (WSP) at 360-586-1998. If there is an emergency in the garage, please call 911. If you believe the state is responsible for damage to you or your vehicle, you can [file a claim](#) with the Office of Risk Management.

Are you going to enforce oversize parking?

At this time, DES will be monitoring the use of both standard and oversize stalls. If there is a need for enforcement, DES will evaluate options for additional compliance measures.

What is the difference between a mid-size vehicle and a oversize vehicle?

Based on our classification of a mid-size vehicle (Honda CRV or similar), where the vehicle width is approximately 6 feet, the vehicle would fit into a compact stall which is 8 feet wide. The larger vehicles like a Chevrolet Suburban are approximately 7 feet wide and while they dimensionally still fit, it doesn't leave much room to exit the vehicle.

Are there cameras in the Plaza Garage?

There is one camera in the Plaza Garage located at the entrance of OB2.

Can DES install more cameras in the Plaza Garage?

DES has submitted a capital budget request for funding for additional security on campus including cameras for the Plaza Garage. We will not know if the request will be included in the budget until the end of the 2017 Legislative Session.

PARKING STALLS

What will the size of the stalls be after the striping?

When planning the re-striping project for the Plaza Garage, a DES study found 70 percent of parkers drive compact and medium sized vehicles and 30 percent drive large vehicles. Before the project began, all stalls in the Plaza Garage were approximately 9 feet wide. After the re-striping, 70 percent of the stalls will be converted from 9 foot stalls to 8 foot stalls.

Most of the outer ring of parking stalls on each level will remain 9 feet wide for those parkers who drive larger vehicles and will be identified as such.

How many new stalls will be added to the garage after the re-striping?

More than 100.

How many of the stalls will be reserved for agency vehicles?

DES is currently working with all agencies on the Capitol Campus to reduce the number of reserved stalls in all campus lots. As directed by the Legislature, the total number of reserved stalls will be converted from 1,609 to 925 by the end of the project.

How many reserved stalls are in the Plaza Garage?

There are currently 192 reserved stalls in the Plaza Garage.



Will you increase [Americans with Disabilities Act](#) (ADA) compliant stalls to meet the demand?

ADA compliant parking is increasing from 19 stalls to 35. Employees who are eligible for ADA or reasonable accommodation parking should work with their Human Resources office to determine the best option for them.

What does ADA compliant mean?

ADA compliance means that the size and dimensions of the parking area meet state and federal guidelines. The ADA stalls in the Plaza Garage are in accordance with the WSDOT standard plans [M-17.10-02](#).

Is a placard required to park in a reasonable accommodation stall?

DES does not require a placard for reasonable accommodation parking. However, if you feel you need reasonable accommodation parking, we recommend you work with your agency's Human Resources office to receive an assessment to best meet your accommodation needs.

Will there be more parking spaces for rideshares and vanpools?

There will be no additional stalls reserved for rideshares and vanpools.

Will there be a designated area of oversize parking for vanpools?

During construction, existing vanpool signage was taken down. DES will re-evaluate where signage needs to be placed for vanpoolers and carpoolers that park in the Plaza Garage. In the meantime, we recommend that they attempt to park in the oversized stalls.

NAVIGATION IMPROVEMENTS

Traffic lanes that have traditionally been one way or two way are changing directions but signage identifying the changes are either confusing or non-existent.

DES has directed the contractor to post prominent, temporary signage when traffic lane directions change. Permanent signage will be posted further into the project.

Will the new, permanent signage direct parkers to vacant stalls?

The new signage will not direct parkers to vacant stalls or how to park. However, it will improve the flow of traffic.

Will the lighting be increased?

The lighting in the Plaza Garage was upgraded about four years ago, resulting in an energy saving of 1,792,855 kWh and a total annual utility savings of \$117,783. The current lighting runs with occupancy sensors that dim to 16W when the area is unoccupied, compared to an average of 86W when occupied. There are currently no plans to change the current lighting.

What are the hours of operation for the stair tower elevators?

The elevators in the Plaza Garage operate between 5 a.m. and 8 p.m.



CAPITOL CAMPUS PARKING

What do parking fees pay for?

A portion goes to the Department of Transportation for the state agency Commute Trip Reduction program, which provides the STAR Pass and emergency-ride home program. Fees also pay for Capitol Campus parking operations, utilities, maintenance, repairs, renovation, and enforcement. Portions allocated to taxes go to the state's general fund and local governments to be used for various public services.

Will this project have an effect on my parking fees?

No. However, as a [standard business practice](#), DES is currently evaluating an adjustment to parking fees in order to meet the demands of the Capitol Campus. The last adjustment to parking fees was in 2008.

Why is there no parking at the new 1063 Building?

The bill creating the 1063 Block Replacement Project did not contain funding for the construction of a new parking facility to replace the 261 stalls lost with the demolition of the parking garage at the corner of 11th Avenue and Columbia Street. This is one reason for this project to increase parking in the Plaza Garage.

Why didn't the state build a new parking garage instead of restriping the Plaza Garage?

Building a new parking structure would cost millions of dollars and would greatly increase parking fees. Increasing parking in the Plaza Garage brings the best value to employees who park there.

Why is a state employee visitor lot being added in the Plaza Garage?

In the [2015 Parking Implementation Plan](#), DES is directed to increase visitor parking, in part, by limiting off-campus state employee use of visitor parking lots by making parking available in the East Plaza Garage for employees visiting the Capitol Campus for business and training.